IN THE CLAIMS

This is a complete and current listing of the claims, marked with status identifiers in parentheses. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A filter for filtering electronic messages, said filter comprising:

— storage space for an allowed list comprising identification insignias of senders which have been approved for sending messages to a recipient,

— means for receiving a first electronic message from a sender,

— means for capturing from the message an identification insignia of the sender,

— means for capturing from the message an identification insignia of the recipient,

— first check means for comparing the identification insignia with the allowed list for determining either to withhold the message or to forward the message to the recipient,

— means for storing the message and insignia,

— means for generating a return message to the sender in case the identification insignia is not included in the allowed list, the means for returning the message being adapted to include in the returned message a unique code, and a message for the sender to reply to the returned message by sending it back without changing the unique code,

— means for storing the unique code and relating it to the insignia, and

— second check means for receiving a second electronic message and for ~~recognising~~recognizing the second message being a reply to the returned message, ~~characterised in that~~wherein the filter further comprises:

- ~~prioritising~~prioritizing means which, in response to recognition of the second message being a reply to the returned message, assigns a priority to each of the identification insignias of the senders of the first messages, and

- means for selecting identification insignias and adding the selected insignias to the allowed list, wherein the means for selecting are adapted to carry out the selection according to the priorities assigned to the identification insignias.

2. (Previously Presented) A filter according to claim 1, wherein the second check means performs the recognition by:

- capturing in the second message the unique code, and a second identification insignia of the sender of the second message, and

- checking that the unique code has not changed, and that the second identification insignia corresponds to the first identification insignia.

3. (Currently Amended) A filter according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, further comprising means for capturing from a server a list comprising at least one address from which the sender has access to send messages from.

4. (Previously Presented) A filter according to claim 3, further comprising means for checking that the sender is sending from an address included in the list.

5. (Currently Amended) A filter according to ~~any of the preceding~~ claims 1, further comprising means for generating a predict allowed list comprising identification insignias of third party message recipients included by the sender in the first or the second electronic message.

6. (Currently Amended) A filter according to ~~any of the preceding~~ claims 1, further comprising rule based selection means which, based on recognition of a specific pattern in

the content of the message sets the priority of the identification insignias.

7. (Currently Amended) A filter according to ~~any of the preceding~~ claims 1, further comprising means for automatically selection of insignias with priorities above a predetermined value for the allowed list.

8. (Currently Amended) A filter according to ~~any of the preceding~~ claims 1, wherein the identification insignias of the senders and the data identifying the sender include at least a domain identification of the sender's electronic mail address.

9. (Currently Amended) A filter according to ~~any of the preceding~~ claims 1, further comprising means for withholding the electronic message from final delivery to the intended recipient until an administrator has accepted delivery of the message to the recipient, the administrator being one of a human administrator, a software-implemented administrator, and the recipient of the message.

10. (Currently Amended) A filter according to ~~any of the preceding~~ claims 1, further comprising storage for a black-list, and means for checking occurrence of an identification insignia in the black-list prior to comparing the identification insignia with the allowed list.

11. (Currently Amended) A filter according to ~~any of the preceding~~ claims 1, comprising means for communicating, in an SMTP message, and in response to receiving the message from a sender with an insignia not included in the allowed list or optionally, with an insignia included in the black-list, that the message could not be delivered to the recipient.

12. (Previously Presented) A filter according to claim 11, comprising counting means for counting a number of reoccurrences of identical messages being received, and for adding the insignia of the sender of such messages which reoccur more than a pre-specified number of times to the black-list.

13. (Currently Amended) A filter according to ~~any of the preceding~~ claims 1, comprising means for adding to the allowed list, insignias of potential senders to whom the recipient has previously been sending messages.

14. (Currently Amended) A filter according to ~~any of the preceding~~ claims 1, comprising means for measuring a frequency of messages to and from a specific sender, and upon detection of frequencies above a pre-specified level, for forwarding the first message to the recipient irrespective if the insignia of the sender is not in the allowed list.

15. (Currently Amended) A filter according to ~~any of the preceding~~ claims 1, wherein the means for generating a return message to the sender is adapted to send the return message by use of an identification insignia corresponding to the identification insignia of the intended recipient of the first message.

16. (Currently Amended) A method for filtering electronic messages, said method comprising the steps of:

– assigning space in a computer system for a list comprising identification insignias of senders which have been approved for sending messages to a recipient,

– receiving a first electronic message from a sender,

– capturing from the message an identification insignia of the sender,

– capturing from the message an identification insignia of the recipient,

– comparing the identification insignia with the allowed list for determining either to withhold the message or to forward the message to the recipient,

– storing the message and insignia in a storage space of the computer system,

– generating a return message to the sender in case the identification insignia is not included in the allowed list, and including in the returned message a unique code,

and a message for the sender to reply to the return message by sending it back without changing the unique code,

— storing the unique code and relating it to the insignia, and

— receiving a second electronic message and ~~recognising~~recognizing the second message being a reply to the returned message,

~~characterised in that~~wherein the method comprises the steps of:

— in response to recognition of the second message being a reply to the returned message, assigning a priority to each of the identification insignias of the senders of the first messages, and

selecting identification insignias and adding the selected insignias to the allowed list, wherein the selecting is carried according to the priorities assigned to the identification insignias.